



U.S. Department of Justice

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Jury Finds Businessman and Tax Attorney Guilty of Tax Fraud**

Acting United States Attorney Thomas Scott Woodward announced that a jury returned a guilty verdict today against two men who participated in a complex tax fraud scheme in an attempt to evade federal income taxes.

Lindsey Kent Springer, 44, a Kellyville businessman, and Oscar Amos Stilley, 46, an attorney from Fort Smith, Arkansas, were both found guilty of all counts with which they were charged in a Grand Jury Indictment returned last March. The Indictment charged the two men with *Conspiracy to Defraud the United States* and *Tax Evasion*, and additionally charged Springer with *Failure to File Tax Returns*. Neither Springer nor Stilley have filed an income tax return since the late 1980's.

Springer used the name Bondage Breakers Ministry to solicit and receive money. His stated purpose for Bondage Breakers Ministry was "to get rid of the Internal Revenue Service." Stilley, an attorney and tax advisor, assisted Springer's tax evasion scheme through a variety of means. Stilley maintained an interest bearing account, called an Arkansas IOLTA Foundation Trust account, which lawyers use to deposit and hold client funds. The pair allegedly used the IOLTA account and various other devices such as cashier's checks, check cashing services, money orders, cash and other means to conceal Springer's actual income and avoid creating the usual records of financial institutions. Springer told IRS employees that all funds he receives are gifts and donations to his ministry, and that he does not have any income. He also stated he does not provide any services for payment. There were numerous transactions involving hundreds of thousands of dollars between Springer and Stilley that flowed through the IOLTA account, such as \$166,000 paid out in August 2005 to purchase a motor home titled in the name of Springer and his wife, and a September 2005 payment of \$25,813 to purchase a Lexus automobile titled in Springer's name.

"Today's convictions send a loud and clear message to illegal tax defiers," said John A. DiCicco, Acting Assistant Attorney General of the Justice Department Tax Division. "Those who rely on fraudulent arguments to avoid paying their fair share of income taxes will be found out, prosecuted, and when convicted face substantial prison sentences and fines."

"The jury delivered a just decision today in finding the defendants guilty of failing to file tax returns, conspiracy to defraud the United States and tax evasion," said Eileen Mayer, Chief, IRS Criminal Investigation Division. "Any person who willfully fails to file required tax returns or conceals income for the purpose of evading taxes is committing a federal crime. We should not forget that the ultimate victim of tax evasion is the people of the United States; those taxpayers who dutifully file and pay taxes each year."

Acting U.S. Attorney Woodward added, "The investigators and prosecutors in this case worked diligently to uncover the illegal activities of Springer and Stilley, and they did an outstanding job of presenting the evidence to the jury resulting in the convictions of the defendants. The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Oklahoma will continue to vigorously prosecute flagrant offenders of the nation's tax laws in an effort to make the system fair to all."

The sentencing date for the defendants will be set after the Judge confers with the U.S. Probation Office. The men face a maximum prison sentence of up to five years per felony count and/or a \$250,000 fine per count. Springer faces a total of 22 years and Stilley faces a total of 15 years.

The prosecution of the matter is being handled by the Department of Justice Tax Division Trial Attorney Charles O'Reilly and Northern District of Oklahoma Senior Litigation Counsel, Assistant U.S. Attorney Kenneth Snoke. The investigation was undertaken by the Tulsa Office of the IRS Criminal Investigation Division.